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NSC BRIEFING

19 January 1959

FRANCE-ALGERIA

- I. New French initiatives to resolve the Algerian problem are believed
25X6 to be under way despite wholesale denials on all sides.

III. French rightists in parliament and Algeria are still major stumbling-
blocks to any solution except "integration" of Algeria with France.

A. The "Gaullist" Union for New Republic, the largest

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National Assembly group, and the Independents, last week voted overwhelmingly approval for the "integration" stand of the Algerian deputies in the Assembly.

1. Even Premier Debre, loyal to De Gaulle, sounded integrationist in his first policy outline speech to parliament on 15 January.

B. In Algeria, European settlers are now openly critical of De Gaulle, and extremists are trying to reorganize and regain Army support.

1. The settlers are hampered, however, by fact that "machinery for demonstrations is rusty."

2. Army, though still predominantly favoring integration and opposed to independence, appears ready to obey De Gaulle.

C. Publicly De Gaulle still on record that resolution of political status of Algeria would await implementation of economic and social development program (this could be years).

IV. Overall considerations reinforce the likelihood of a French initiative at this time.

A. The continuing drain ^{of Algerian fighting} imperils De Gaulle's austerity program for France.

B. Popular approval in France of the 13 January clemency measures reinforces the impression that the French public wants the Algerian problem settled and is not too concerned about how.

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